

EASTER 2014

4th SUNDAY OF
EASTER
MAY 11



EASTER IS THE GOOD SHEPHERD

The earliest image/painting that we have of Jesus is the carving of the Good Shepherd, not the cross. It indicates how the early believers paid attention to the resurrected Jesus.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD (John, Chapter 10, Verses 1-10)

He walks ahead of them and the sheep follow him, because they recognize his voice.

See how he loves them.

He calls them each by name.

They know his voice and follow him.

*When his sheep are safe in the sheepfold,
he lies down across the only opening.*

No prowler can hurt them now

All who enter must go

through him first.

because he is the gate.

Because he lays down his life for his sheep.

Lord, who else loves us the way you do?

Who would lay down his life to keep us safe?

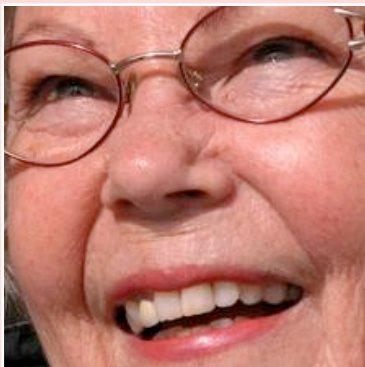
*Speak to us often so our hearts will know your voice
and we will follow you wherever you lead us.*

*You have known us since we were
in our mothers' wombs.*

*You call us
each by name.*

And we know your name.

EASTER IN US



If Jesus is the Good Shepherd, then his followers/disciples must be the good shepherd to others.

Be that moment of compassion and patience toward the elder who moves so slowly. Have a heart that listens to the young adult trying to sort their life out of the mistakes they have made. Be Christ to these people.

WHY THE GOOD SHEPHERD IS SO IMPORTANT

Jesus took the stuff right around him to describe the mystery of God. The people knew about the shepherds. These farmers lives so close to his sheep that he would sleep within the gate/entrance of the sheep corral. If any thief wanted to break in at night he would have had to climb over the shepherd in order to steel the sheep. This indicates how protective the shepherd was toward his sheep. But it was also dangerous. Maybe the thief would beat the sleeping shepherd up first!

The shepherd knew his sheep and would call them out of the corral each morning. They recognized his voice and would follow him to grass and water (remembering that this farming was done in a very arid land). The sheep trusted the shepherd and would follow him.

The shepherd knew his sheep intimately. He lived with them and smelt like them! This closeness does not appeal to today's overly clean person.

Anyone who does not come to the corral as the shepherd is a thief. The sheep did not recognize the voice of the stranger.

Use your imagination to stand with the shepherd as he cares for his sheep. Be one of the sheep and look into the eyes of the shepherd. Look how the goodness and commitment of the shepherd gives you confidence and trust. Do not just celebrate Easter, stand with the Good Shepherd.

Now Jesus takes this image and applies it to his own life and mission. On this fourth Sunday of Easter we want to have this image deepened within us. The Word of God this Sunday draws us close to the center of the Resurrected Christ.



**You are the
Good
Shepherd.**

BE THE FACE OF THE RESURRECTED CHRIST

Liz had a mind that zeroed in at what was actually happening right around her. She could annoy many people because she told it as it was!

“The biggest difficulty we have in our parish is to consider that the people are meant to be the living face of Christ. We receive what is holy and of God at Sunday Mass so that we can move back into the world and be the living face of Christ. Our face must be Christ’s face.”

The Jesus we know and live with is the resurrected Son of God. In our prayer and the sacraments we are given the resurrected Christ but it was never meant to stop there. The love and mercy of God must now be shared with the people of the world.

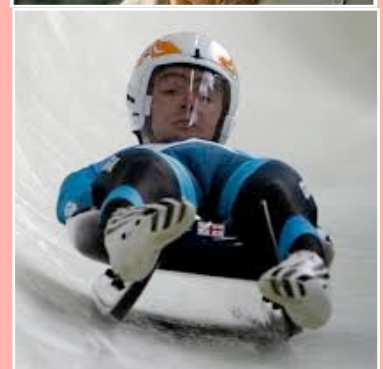


It is in this sense that the resurrection of Jesus is always a now event.

Jesus must be resurrected in the attention to pay the poor and the suffering of this world. We do not ignore them but rather we come to listen to their stories. We come to know their pain and suffering, in order that we may help them to live and thrive.

As we ‘break the bread’ at the Sunday Eucharist we are meant to break our lives for one another. It is in our hands that we are meant to be the hands of the risen Christ to others.

EASTER IN US



When we give the command to “Easter in us” we are asking that what has happened in the life of the risen Christ now happen in us.

Take these faces in the column above and apply this prayer to them. Then add the three faces of the people close to you and ask that you be the face of the resurrected Christ to them.

PRAYERS TO THE GOOD SHEPHERD

STANDING WITH JESUS

We stand before you, Lord,
not as a thief or a bandit who
wants to rob you
but as a worker who walks up
to the gate of the sheepfold.

The gatekeeper trusts us, he
opens the gate.

We want to be like the sheep
who hear and trust the voice of the
shepherd,

who goes ahead of them. We
trust, we follow.

Jesus, you are the gate.

When we enter the gate we will
be saved,

Lift our confidence to know
that you have come to give us your
divine life and to give it to us
abundantly.

**May your smile be the smile
of the Good Shepherd**



**O God of peace, who
brought again from the
dead our Lord Jesus Christ,
that great shepherd of the
sheep, by the blood of the
eternal covenant, make us
perfect in every good work
to do your will, and work in
us that which is well-
pleasing in your sight;**

*O God, you never cease
to call even those far away,
for it is your will that all be
drawn into one fold. Attune
our ears to the voice of the
Good Shepherd, who leads us
always to you, that we may
find under your tender
protection in all its fullness*

MAKE THE WORDS OF THE RISEN CHRIST YOUR OWN THIS SUNDAY

“When he was at table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight.” Lk. 24, 30-31

“They said to each other, ‘Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us? Lk. 24, 32